

Special Meeting Minutes Tempe Historical Museum Advisory Board December 5, 2013

Minutes of the Tempe Historical Museum Advisory Board special meeting recorded as of 2:05 p.m. on December 5, 2013, within the Tempe History Museum Board Room, 809 E. Southern Avenue, Tempe, AZ.

(MEMBERS) Present:

Shirley McKean Mark Hubble Mary O'Grady Jennifer Wagner Nikki Gusz James Schoenwetter

(MEMBERS) Absent:

Robert McKinley

City Staff Present:

Barbara Roberts, Deputy Director of Community Services, Cultural and Library Services
Dr. Amy Douglass, Manager, Tempe History Museum

Dan Miller, Exhibits Coordinator
Josh Roffler, Curator of Collections
Jared Smith, Curator of History
Aaron Peterson, TLC Facilitator

Guest(s) Present:

Anne Chandler, Tempe Historical Society Board member Vic Linoff, Tempe Historical Society Vice President Peggy Moroney, Volunteer History Interpreter Dan Thompson, Collections Volunteer

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order

 The meeting convened at 2:05 p.m. Amy Douglass, Museum Manager, called the meeting to order.

Agenda Item 2: Introduction

 Aaron Petersen, facilitator from TLC, introduced himself and the strategic planning process.

Agenda Item 3: Behind-the-Scenes Tour

- Amy Douglass explained that the group would now be going on a tour of the various work areas of the museum staff and that each staff member in turn would speak on their job responsibilities and the resources that they had to fulfill their responsibilities.
- Josh Roffler, Curator of Collections, spoke in the collections processing area about the
 accessioning, cataloging and housing aspects of artifact collections management. He
 also touched on the role of the Curator of Collections in putting together exhibits and
 fulfilling research requests.
- He explained that there used to be three positions that cared for the artifact collections:
 Curator of Collections, Curator of Photographs and Archives, and Registrar. Being the

- only staff member overseeing this area at present, he relies heavily on volunteers and interns to complete the many labor-intensive tasks that are required in his area.
- Dan Miller, Exhibits Coordinator, spoke about the exhibits productions process, the
 equipment in the fabrication workshop and his ability to produce large graphic panels
 with End Design software and the large format printer. He also spoke briefly about the
 Public Programs Committee formulating an event calendar and how events are
 produced. Dan also cited the use of volunteers and interns to assist with exhibits and
 event setup and break down.
- Jared Smith, Curator of History, spoke in the research library about the resources that
 he has to work with, the types of research that he conducts, the oral history program and
 his work with researchers. He stated that he relies on volunteers to assist in keeping the
 topical research files up to date with news articles and other materials. Volunteers also
 do the oral history interviews and transcribe the tapes.
- Amy Douglass, Museum Manager, summarized the education programs that she has been overseeing since the loss of the Curator of Education position in 2001. The three main programs are: the Fifth Grade Program in the Tempe History Museum exhibit hall, the fourth grade Territorial Days Program at the Petersen House Museum and Wild Wednesdays at the Tempe History Museum. Volunteer Peggy Moroney also mentioned the Girl Scout badge program. Dr. Douglass explained that these programs were in place before she assumed responsibility for them, although they have gone some extensive revision. However, it is not possible with current staff to create entirely new programs.

Agenda Item 4: Brainstorming

- Facilitator Aaron Peterson asked the group to identify the major stakeholders who would be interested in or affected by the strategic plan. The group identified the following stakeholders:
 - o Tempe City Council
 - Tempe Historical Society
 - Educators
 - Other Museums
 - Cultural Institutions
 - Museum Attendees
 - ASU
 - Tempe Departments
 - Donors
 - Facility Renters
 - Tourists
 - Museum Store Shoppers
 - Researchers
 - Performers
 - Vendors
 - Speakers
 - News Media
 - Volunteers
 - Museum Staff
 - o Funders

- Residents
- Historical Professionals
- Advisory Groups
- Library
- o Businesses
- Non-Profits
- Future Users
- o Children/Parents/Families
- The group then identified the expectations of the Museum that some of these stakeholders might have:
 - Quality
 - Tone/Readability
 - Viability/Sustainability
 - Achievability
 - Access
 - Technology
 - Visibility
 - Services in General
 - Customer Service
 - Metrics (Attendance, etc.)
 - Efficiency
 - Partnerships
 - Community Center
 - o A "Gathering Place"
 - Community Identity
 - Hospitality

Agenda Item 5: SWOT Analysis

 Aaron Petersen then led the group through a SWOT analysis of the museum. The following strengths and weaknesses were identified.

STRENGTHS

- Support System
 - o Staff
 - Volunteers
 - Other Departments
- The Facility
 - Space
 - Exhibit Area
 - Location
 - Parking
 - o Community Room
- Access to ASU
- Sense of service
- City support for volunteers
- Diversity of offerings

WEAKNESSES

- Minimal staff
 - o No backup
- Location on campus
- Size "where is 2nd floor?"
- Not known
- Marketing
 - IT support could be improved
 - Digital database
- Funding
- Overall budget
- Aging building
- Signage and visibility

- Historic town celebrated
 - High community pride
 - Sense of identity
- Partnerships
 - o ASU
 - o Other museums
 - Diverse relationships in community
- Petersen House
- Collections
 - o Photos
- Not having to fundraise
- Is free to attend
 - The following opportunities and threats were identified by the group.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Partnerships
 - Corporate
 - Fundraising potential
- "Local Movement"
 - Marketing theme
 - o Communications plan
- Accessibility Through Technology
- Showcase our culture
 - Partnerships
 - ASU
 - Other
- Process Improvements
 - Cataloging
 - o Time suckers
- Capture "Current" History what will be looked at as historical in the future
- Technical Innovation
 - Speech to text
- Performances on Channel 11
- Turnover of residences and students
- Tempe is a transportation hub
- Revenue Development

THREATS

- Big Data
- Speed of technical change
- Is Museum "duplicating" TCA?
- Political whimsy
- Speaking to a changing audience
- Budget limitations
 - o Petersen House Endowment
- Staff shortage
 - o Burnout
 - Stagnation of programs
 - Missed opportunities for new programs

- Amy Douglass thanked all the participants of the strategic planning kick-off meeting.
- She stated that the various committees should meet and identify metrics pertaining to their areas that might inform the group as a whole about the museum's current operations. They also should begin to discuss some possible goals and objectives that could fold into the strategic plan.
- It was decided that all of this information should be brought back to the group as a whole at the next strategic planning meeting on January 9, 2014 at 2:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

Prepared by: Dr. Amy Douglass, Tempe History Museum Manager
Shirley McKean, Chair, Tempe Historical Museum Advisory Board